<u>**Amendments to the Claims**</u>

1. (Currently Amended) A system for providing recorded announcements on a communications network comprising:

at least one central terminal for routing communications on the communication network and in communication with the network, the at least one central terminal further comprising an announcement digital signal processor ~~in communication with the incoming call~~, wherein the announcement digital signal processor converts one or more digital packet files to voice signals;

an announcement service node coupled to the at least one central terminal further comprising a data schema and an application server for accessing the data schema, wherein the announcement service node provides access via subscription to an inventory of recorded announcement digital packet files on a per-use basis,

wherein the application server is accessible by more than one central terminal coupled to the communications network,

wherein said data schema comprises a storage mass for storing the plurality of recorded announcement digital packet files, the plurality of recorded announcement digital packet files including information for callers on the communications network, and

wherein a call from an individual is connected to the announcement digital signal processor at the at least one central terminal, with the announcement digital signal processor receiving an announcement digital packet file from the announcement service node while the call from the individual is connected to the at least one central terminal and converting the announcement digital packet file to a voice file so as to audibly convey information to the calling individual as the recorded announcement is played from the at least one central terminal during the call; and

an SS7 network, wherein the at least one central terminal initiates queries to the announcement service node via the SS7 network.

2. (Original) A system according to claim 1, wherein said storage mass comprises a relational database.

3. (Original) A system according to claim 1, wherein at least a portion of said stored recording

announcements are in the form of Lightweight Directory Access Protocol.

4.   (Canceled)

5. (Previously Presented) A system according to claim 1, wherein said central terminal comprises a central office of a telephone service network.

6.   (Original) A system according to claim 5, wherein said central office initiates queries to said announcement service node in X.25 protocol.

7.   (Original) A system according to claim 1, comprising a plurality of central offices of a telephone service provider coupled to the service node of the telephone service provider.

8-24. (Cancelled)

25. (Currently Amended) A method of providing recorded announcements to devices on a network for a telephone service provider comprising ~~the steps of~~:

coupling a request for a recorded announcement from a~~t~~ least one central terminal ~~device~~ on the network of the telephone service provider to a centralized announcement service node, the centralized announcement service node coupled to the ~~via~~ at least one central terminal, the at least one central terminal comprising an announcement digital signal processor, the recorded announcement including information for a user[[s]] who place~~s~~ calls on the service provider's network, wherein the at least one central terminal initiates queries to the centralized announcement service node via an SS7 network;

~~coupling a plurality of queries for recorded announcements to the centralized announcement service node via an SS7 network;~~

retrieving, in response to [[a]] the request for a[[n]] recorded announcement ~~from a device~~, at least one recorded announcement file from a centralized storage mass coupled to the centralized announcement service node and the service provider's network ~~of said telephone service provider~~ while a call from the user ~~the device~~ is connected to the announcement digital signal processor at the least one central terminal ~~caller~~, wherein the centralized announcement

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service node and its coupled centralized storage mass [[is]] <u>are</u> separated from the at least one central terminal, and wherein the <u>centralized</u> announcement service node provides access via subscription to an inventory of recorded announcement files on a per-use basis;

digitally compressing at least one recorded announcement in response to the coupled request;

providing at least one digitally compressed recorded announcement to [[a]] <u>the at least one central terminal</u> ~~device on the service provider's network~~ in response to the coupled request while the <u>at least one central terminal</u> ~~device~~ is connected to <u>the user</u> ~~a caller~~;

converting at least one digitally compressed recorded announcement to at least one voice file via [[an]] <u>the</u> announcement digital signal processor<u>, the digitally compressed recorded announcement comprising one or more digital packet files</u>;

identifying [[a]] <u>the</u> user ~~of said network~~ based on a communication from the <u>at least one central terminal</u> ~~user's device on the network~~;

retrieving at least one recorded announcement for the user based in part on the identification of ~~said~~ <u>the</u> user; and

playing at least one voice file from the announcement digital signal processor to [[a]] <u>the</u> user<u>, the user having</u> ~~who has~~ placed [[a]] <u>the</u> call to the <u>service provider's</u> network<u>,</u> to thereby audibly convey <u>the</u> information to the user during the call.

26. (Canceled)

27. (Currently Amended) A method of providing recorded announcements to devices on a network according to claim 25, comprising ~~the step of~~:

identifying the user based on Dialed Number Identification Service (DNIS).

28. (Currently Amended) A method of providing recorded announcements to devices on a network according to claim 25, comprising ~~the step of~~:

identifying the user based on a code dialed by said user.

29. (Currently Amended) A method of providing recorded announcements to devices on a network according to claim 25, comprising ~~the step of~~:

identifying the user based on Automatic Number Identification (ANI).

30. (Canceled)

31. (Currently Amended) A method of providing recorded announcements to devices on a network according to claim 25, comprising ~~the steps of~~:

adding a recorded announcement to said centralized storage mass; and

providing a translation to a switch on the network correlating to the added recorded announcement.

32. (Currently Amended) A method of providing recorded announcements to devices on a network according to claim 25, comprising ~~the steps of~~:

prioritizing a plurality of queries for recorded announcements from one or more central offices on the network; and

providing a plurality of recorded announcements to said one or more central offices on the network.

33. (Canceled)